

2007 Census of Agriculture

Farm and Ranch Characteristics
By
Age of Principal Farm Operators

Florida

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)



2007 Census of Agriculture Farm Characteristics by Age of Principal Farm Operators

Number of Farms and Average Age of Operator

According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, the 47,463 principal farm operators in Florida averaged 58.4 years of age. The Census also showed that 60% of these farm operators were age **55 or over** and less than 4% of the operators were **under age 35**. Compared to the 2002 Census of Agriculture, there were almost 2,000 fewer farm operators **under age 45** and over 5,300 more operators **age 45 and above**. Over the past 30 years, the average age of principal operators in Florida has increased steadily, from 51.6 to 58.4.

Table 1 – Number of Farms in Florida by Age of Operator

Age of Principal Operator	Number of Farms			Percent of Farms	
	2007	2002	Change	2007	2002
Under 25	89	203	-114	0.2	0.5
25 to 34	1,540	1,660	-120	3.2	3.8
35 to 44	5,278	6,999	-1,721	11.1	15.9
45 to 54	11,993	10,648	1,345	25.3	24.2
55 to 64	13,290	11,131	2,159	28.0	25.3
65 and over	15,273	13,440	1,833	32.2	30.5
All Farms	47,463	44,081	3,382	100.0	100.0

Chart 1 – Percentage of Farms by Age of Principal Operator, 2007

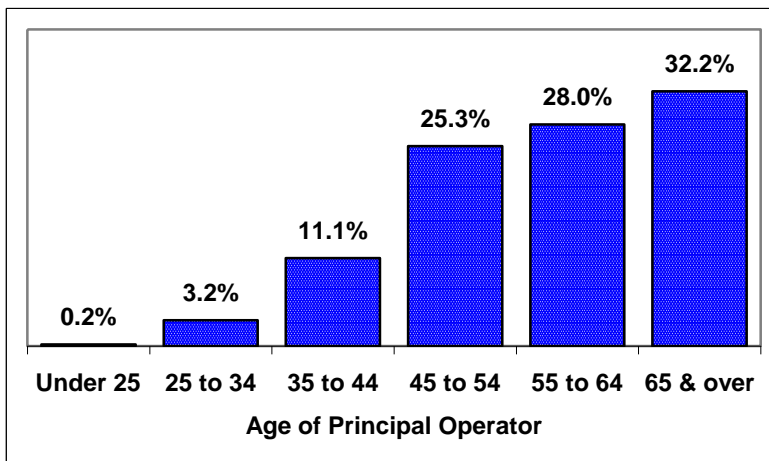


Chart 2 – Change in Number of Farms from 2002 to 2007

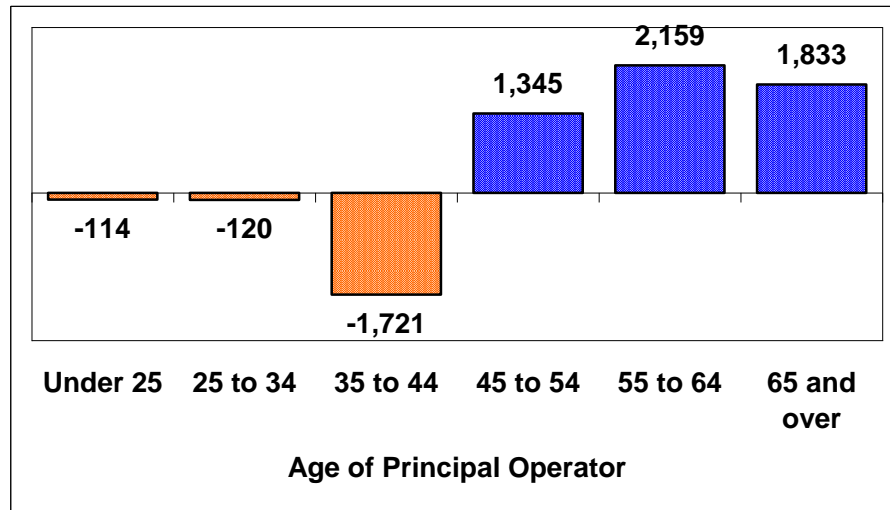
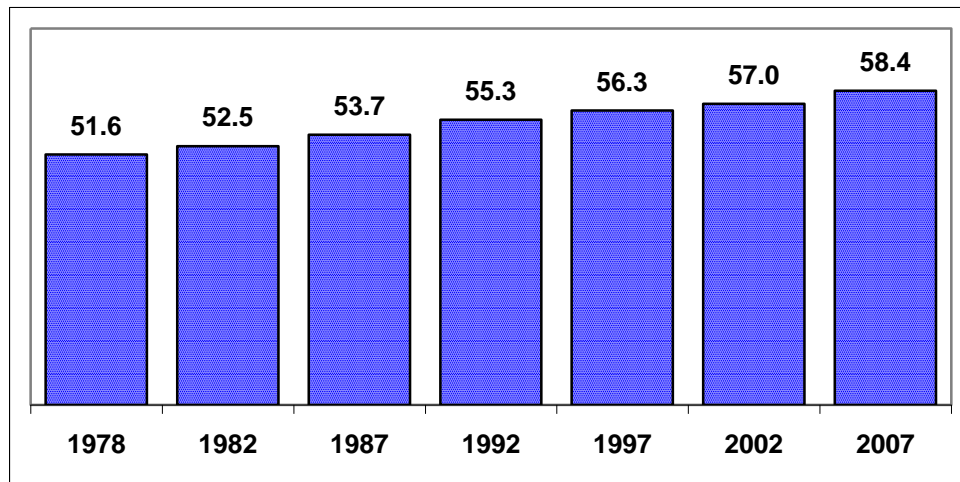


Chart 3 – Average Age of Principal Operator, 1978 - 2007



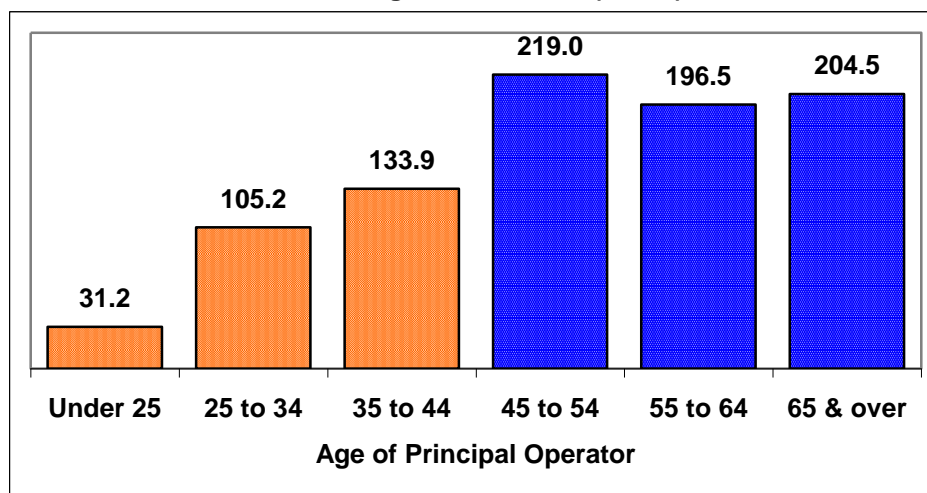
Size of Farm

The majority of farms in Florida are small. While the average farm size in Florida in the 2007 Census of Agriculture was 194.5 acres, there were over 12,000 farms with **less than 10 acres** and only about 1,400 with **1,000 acres or more**. There was strong correlation between size of farm and age of operator – *younger operators tend to operate smaller farms and older operators tend to operate larger farms*. Chart 4 shows that farms operated by those **age 45 or over** were larger (an average farm size of 206 acres) than farms operated by those **under age 45** (an average farm size of 126 acres).

Table 2 – Size of Farms

Age of Operator	Size of Farm (acres)						Average Size (acres)
	1 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 99	100 to 499	500 to 999	1,000 or more	
	Number of Farms						
Under 25	63	16	2	7	1	-	31.2
25 to 34	445	722	103	200	45	25	105.2
35 to 44	1,672	2,441	444	471	114	136	133.9
45 to 54	3,506	5,238	1,131	1,540	242	336	219.0
55 to 64	3,402	5,908	1,345	1,858	355	422	196.5
65 or over	3,096	6,355	1,943	2,960	468	451	204.5
All Operators	12,184	20,680	4,968	7,036	1,225	1,370	194.5
	Percent of Farms						
Under 25	70.8%	18.0%	2.2%	7.9%	1.1%	0.0%	
25 to 34	28.9%	46.9%	6.7%	13.0%	2.9%	1.6%	
35 to 44	31.7%	46.2%	8.4%	8.9%	2.2%	2.6%	
45 to 54	29.2%	43.7%	9.4%	12.8%	2.0%	2.8%	
55 to 64	25.6%	44.5%	10.1%	14.0%	2.7%	3.2%	
65 or over	20.3%	41.6%	12.7%	19.4%	3.1%	3.0%	
All Operators	25.7%	43.6%	10.5%	14.8%	2.6%	2.9%	

Chart 4 – Average Size of Farm (Acres), 2007



Primary Occupation

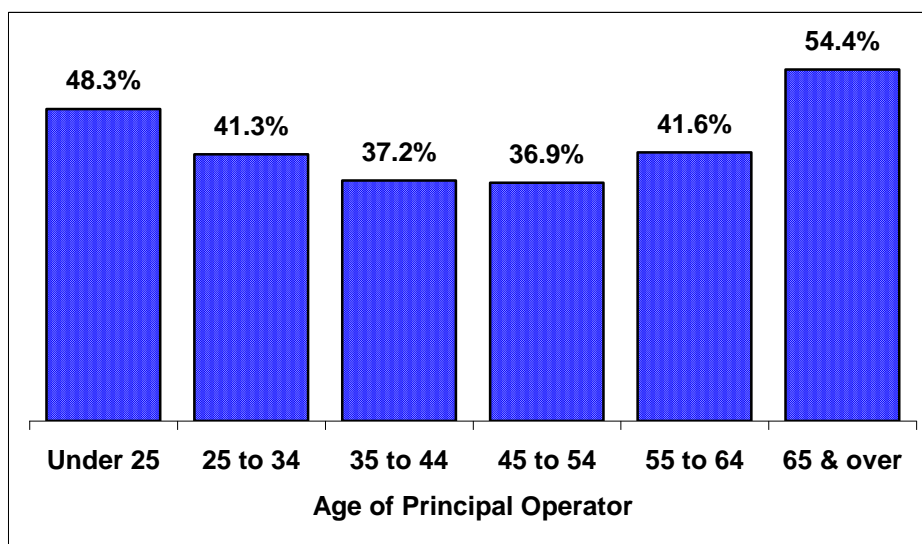
In the 2007 Census, 44% of the principal farm operators in Florida indicated farming was their primary occupation. (These farm operators may have worked off the farm, but farming produced the majority of their income.) The percentage was higher than average among the oldest farmers (54% of those **age 65 and over**) and youngest farmers (48% of those **under age 25**). For farm operators in the

middle age categories (**35 to 44** and **45 to 54**), just over one-third indicated farming was their primary occupation.

Table 3 – Primary Occupation of Principal Operator

Age of Operator	Primary Occupation	
	Farming	Other Than Farming
Under 25	48.3%	51.7%
25 to 34	41.3%	58.7%
35 to 44	37.2%	62.8%
45 to 54	36.9%	63.1%
55 to 64	41.6%	58.4%
65 and over	54.4%	45.6%
All	44.0%	56.0%

Chart 5 – Percentage of Principal Operators With Farming as Primary Occupation



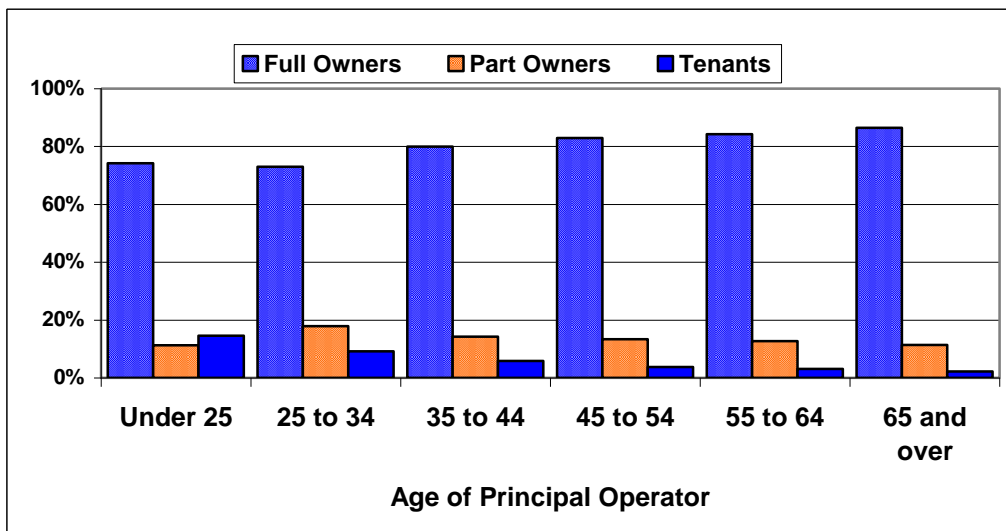
Ownership Status

Almost 84% of principal farm operators in Florida in 2007 were full owners of their farms, 13% were part owners, and 3.5% were tenants. There was correlation between an operator's age and ownership status. *Older farmers were more likely to be full owners than were younger farmers.* The percentage of full owners among operators **55 and over** was 85%, compared to 73% among owners **under age 35**. There is a larger difference among those with tenant status. Just over 2% of the oldest operators (**65 and over**) were tenants, compared to 15% of the youngest operators (**under 25**).

Table 4 – Ownership Status

Age of Operator	Percent of Principal Operators		
	Full Owners	Part Owners	Tenants
Under 25	74.2%	11.2%	14.6%
25 to 34	73.0%	17.9%	9.2%
35 to 44	80.0%	14.2%	5.8%
45 to 54	82.9%	13.3%	3.8%
55 to 64	84.2%	12.7%	3.1%
65 and over	86.5%	11.3%	2.2%
All	83.7%	12.7%	3.5%

Chart 6 – Ownership Status of Principal Operators



Gender

In the 2007 Census of Agriculture, 22% of all principal operators in Florida were women. The percentage of women principal farm operators has increased in recent years. There was very little correlation between age and gender of principal farm operators. *The percentage of women principal operators was consistent (between 20% and 25%) across all age categories.* The highest percentage of women farm operators was in the two middle age categories (**35 to 44** and **45 to 54**).

Residence

Just over 75% of all principal farm operators in Florida in 2007 lived on the farm they operated. *There was very little difference between age categories.* The percentage of operators living on the farm was between 74% and 77% for all age categories except for principal farm operators in the **25 to 34** category, among whom the percentage was only 64%.

Table 5 – Gender of Principal Operator

Age of Operator	Gender	
	Male	Female
Under 25	79.8%	20.2%
25 to 34	79.2%	20.8%
35 to 44	75.9%	24.1%
45 to 54	75.5%	24.5%
55 to 64	79.4%	20.6%
65 and over	79.4%	20.6%
All	78.0%	22.0%

Chart 7 – Percent of Women Principal Farm Operators

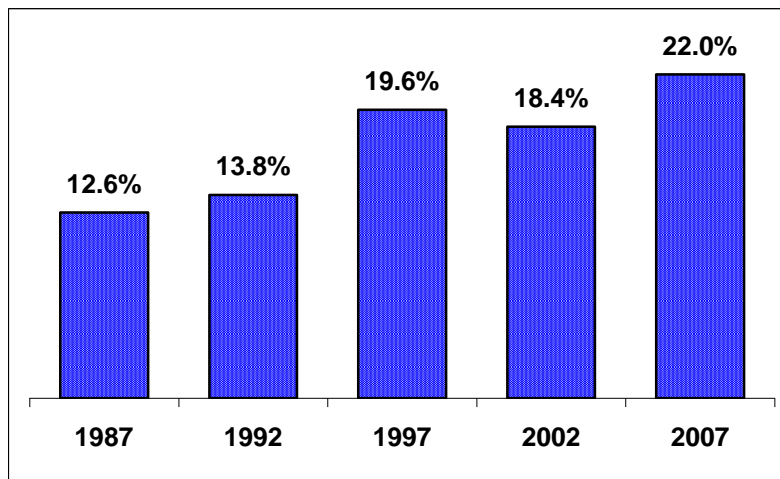


Chart 8 – Percent of Women Principal Operators by Age

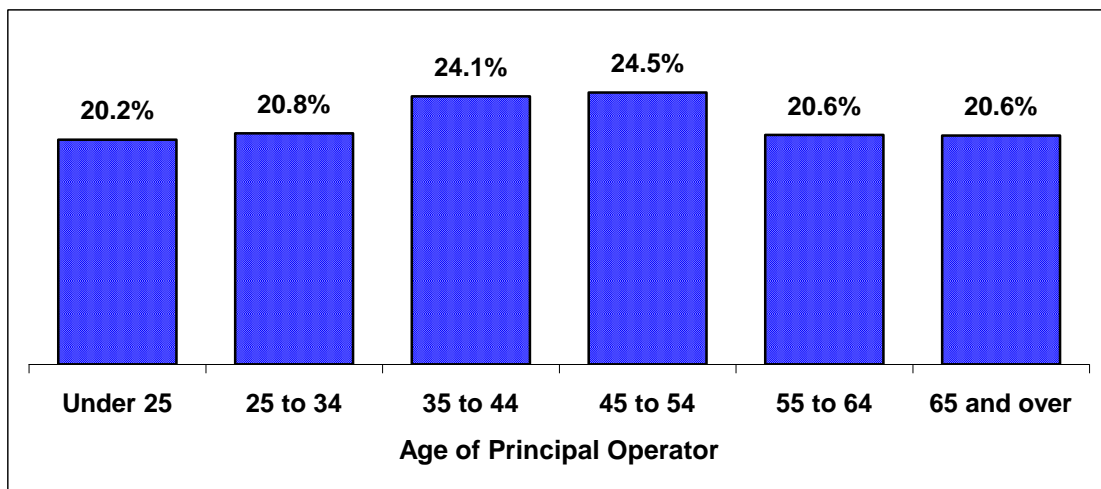
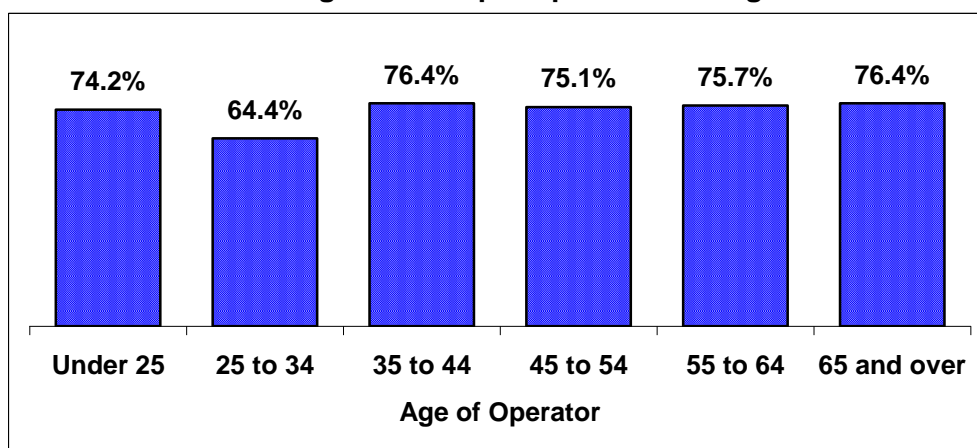


Table 6 – Residence of Principal Operator

Age of Operator	Residence	
	On Farm	Off Farm
Under 25	74.2%	25.8%
25 to 34	64.4%	35.6%
35 to 44	76.4%	23.6%
45 to 54	75.1%	24.9%
55 to 64	75.7%	24.3%
65 and over	76.4%	23.6%
All	75.5%	24.5%

Chart 9 – Percentage of Principal Operators Living on the Farm



Off-Farm Employment

In 2007, two-thirds of all principal farm operators in Florida worked at least some time off the farm, and almost 40% worked 200 or more days off the farm. There were differences in the percentages by age category. *Older farmers were less likely than younger farmers to have off-farm employment.* Only 57% of older farm operators (**age 55 and over**) worked some days off the farm compared to 81% for younger farmers (**less than 35 years of age**). Less than half of the farm operators **age 65 and over** worked some days off the farm compared to 75% of the farm operators **under age 25**.

Table 7 – Off-Farm Employment

Age of Operator	Number of Days Worked Off Farm				
	0	1 to 49	50 to 99	100 to 199	200 or more
Under 25	24.7%	13.5%	7.9%	7.9%	46.1%
25 to 34	18.8%	12.3%	8.1%	12.6%	48.3%
35 to 44	19.2%	11.0%	6.4%	10.5%	53.0%
45 to 54	20.6%	12.0%	6.5%	9.4%	51.5%
55 to 64	29.5%	11.6%	6.2%	10.3%	42.4%
65 or over	54.7%	10.7%	5.7%	6.9%	21.9%
All	33.8%	11.4%	6.2%	9.1%	39.5%

Chart 10 – Principal Operators Working Off Farm

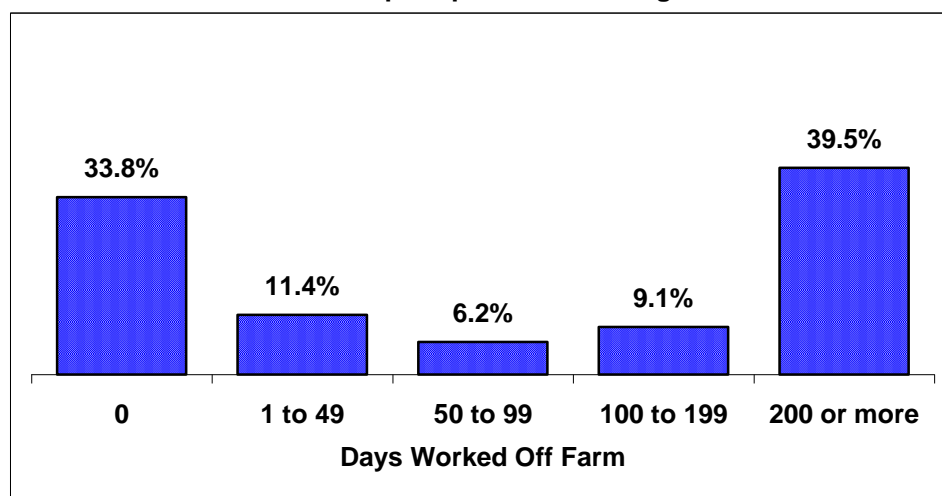
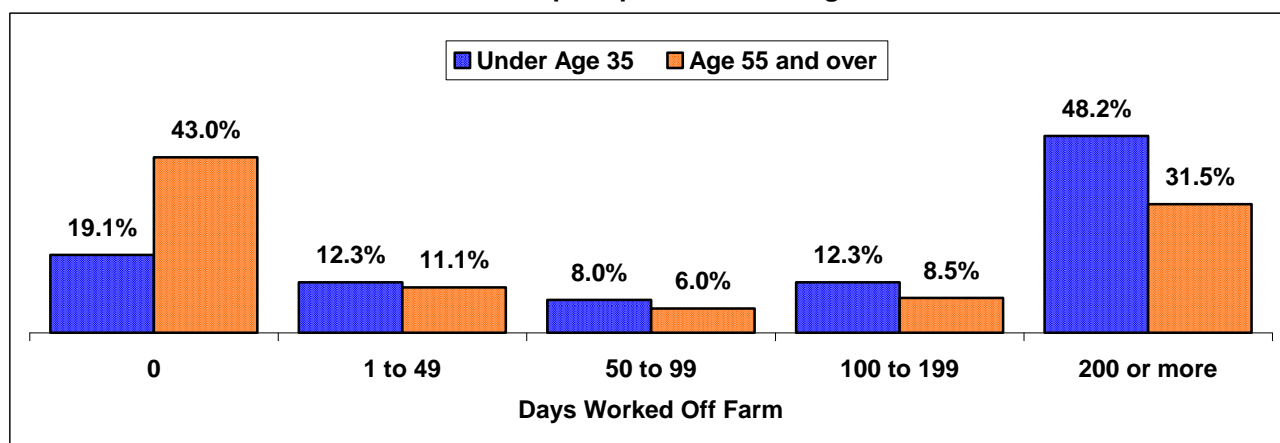


Chart 11 – Principal Operators Working Off Farm



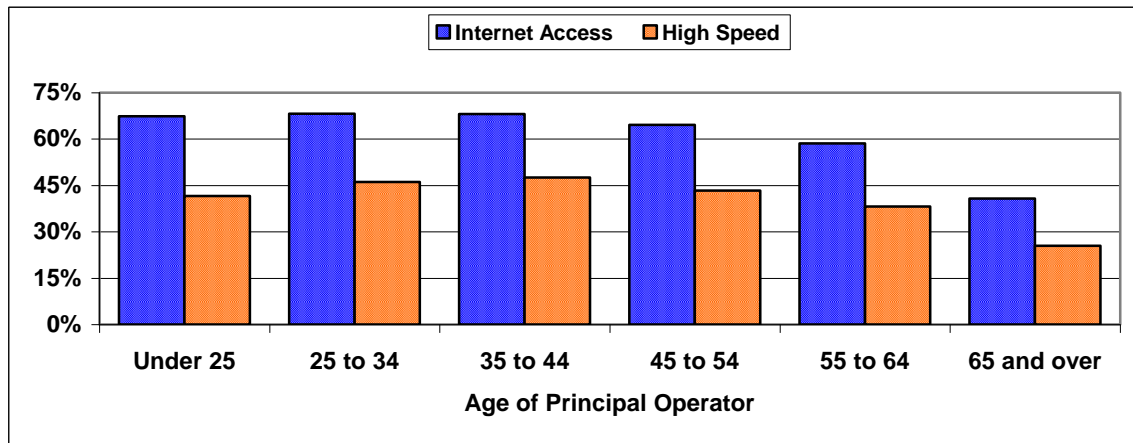
Internet Access

As one might expect, *Internet access is much more common among younger farm operators than among older operators*. Overall in Florida, about 56% of principal farm operators have Internet access and 37% have high-speed access. Over two-thirds of the operators **under age 45** have Internet access (and almost 50% have high speed access), while only 54% of the farm operators **age 45 and over** have it (and only 35% have high-speed access).

Table 8 – Internet Access

Age of Operator	Internet Access	High Speed Access
Under 25	67.4%	41.6%
25 to 34	68.2%	46.1%
35 to 44	68.0%	47.5%
45 to 54	64.6%	43.3%
55 to 64	58.6%	38.2%
65 and over	40.8%	25.5%
All	55.8%	36.7%

Chart 11 – Principal Operators With Internet Access



Typology of Farm

Most farms in Florida in 2007 (89%) were “small family farms”. (The designations of farm typology in this section come from the USDA/Economic Research Service, using data from the 2007 Census of Agriculture.) “Small family farms” are those which had sales less than \$250,000. “Large family farms” are those which had sales between \$250,000 and \$499,999. “Very large family farms” are those which had sales of \$500,000 or more. “Non-family farms” are those which were organized as nonfamily corporations or cooperatives, as well as farms operated by a hired manager. There were very little differences between age categories with respect to type of farm. Operators **under age 35** were slightly more likely to be operators of “non-family farms” than were operators **age 55 and over** – 9% compared to 5%.

Table 9 – Typology of Farms

Age of Operator	Small Family Farms					Large Family Farms	Very Large Family Farms	Non-family Farms
	Limited Resource	Retirement	Residential/Lifestyle	Farming Lower Sales	Farming Higher Sales			
Under 25	38.2%	0.0%	21.3%	24.7%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	13.5%
25 to 34	12.8%	0.0%	48.2%	23.3%	3.4%	1.0%	2.5%	8.8%
35 to 44	14.2%	1.7%	51.5%	17.3%	2.5%	1.9%	3.6%	7.4%
45 to 54	14.1%	3.9%	50.5%	16.7%	2.0%	2.0%	3.8%	7.1%
55 to 64	15.7%	21.2%	37.7%	12.9%	1.8%	1.8%	3.0%	5.8%
65 and over	19.9%	50.9%	13.2%	6.6%	1.4%	1.5%	2.4%	4.1%
All Farms	16.4%	23.5%	34.9%	12.7%	1.8%	1.7%	3.1%	5.9%

Chart 12 – Percent of Farms by Type

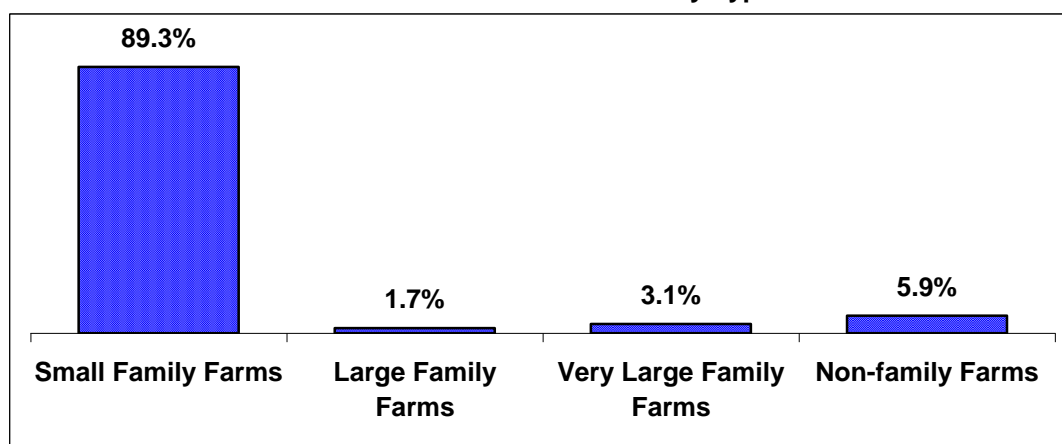
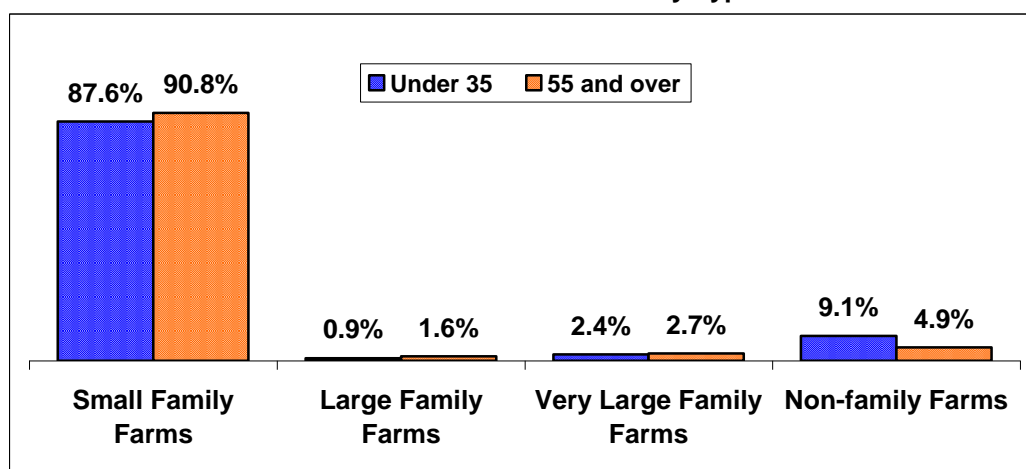


Chart 13 – Percent of Farms by Type



Market Value of Sales and Payments

In 2007, Florida farms sold agricultural products valued at almost \$7.8 billion, an average of \$164,027 per farm. Farm operators in the two middle age categories (**35 to 44** and **45 to 54**) had the highest average value of sales. Younger farmers (**under age 35**) had the lowest average value of sales.

There were over 4,600 farms which received Government payments totaling \$45 million, an average of almost \$10,000 per farm. Farm operators **aged 35 to 44** received the highest average payments.

Table 10 – Market Value of Products Sold and Government Payments

Age of Operator	Market Value of Products Sold			Government Payments		
	Number of Farms	Value (\$1,000)	Average Per Farm	Number of Farms	Value (\$1,000)	Average Per Farm
Under 25	89	\$5,663	\$63,629	3	\$29	\$9,667
25 to 34	1,540	\$174,117	\$113,063	134	\$1,834	\$13,687
35 to 44	5,278	\$1,086,793	\$205,910	322	\$6,243	\$19,388
45 to 54	11,993	\$2,497,220	\$208,223	959	\$11,135	\$11,611
55 to 64	13,290	\$2,023,063	\$152,224	1,303	\$11,994	\$9,205
65 and over	15,273	\$1,998,370	\$130,843	1,943	\$14,107	\$7,260
Total	47,463	\$7,785,226	\$164,027	4,664	\$45,342	\$9,722

Chart 14 – Value of Agricultural Products Sold, Average Per Farm, 2007

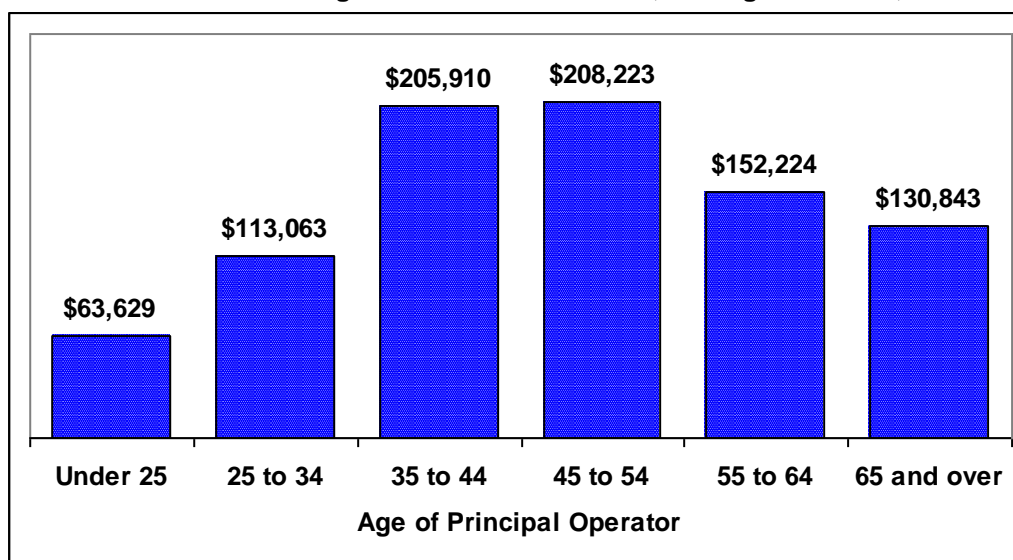
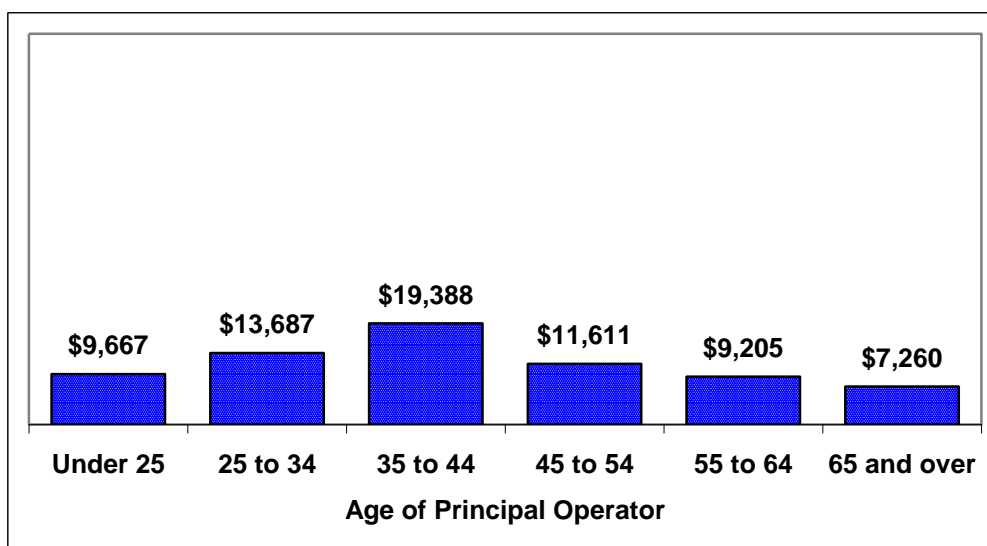


Chart 15 – Value of Government Payments, Average Per Farm, 2007



Value of Land, Buildings, Machinery, and Equipment

According to the 2007 Census, *older farmers had a higher average value of land and buildings **per farm** than did younger farmers.* The average value **per farm** for principal operators **age 45 and over** was over \$1.1 million. The average value **per farm** for operators **under age 45** was \$924,000.

In contrast, the average value of land and buildings **per acre** was higher for younger farmers. The average value **per acre** for principal operators **age 45 and over** was over \$5,463. The average value **per acre** for operators **under age 45** was \$7,320.

Table 11 – Value of Land, Buildings, Machinery, and Equipment

Age of Operator	Land & Buildings				Machinery & Equipment		
	Number of Farms	Estimated Market Value	Average Per Farm	Average Per Acre	Number of Farms	Estimated Market Value	Average Per Farm
		(\$1,000)	dollars	dollars		(\$1,000)	dollars
Under 25	89	\$30,507	\$342,775	\$10,986	89	\$3,189	\$35,831
25 to 34	1,540	\$1,308,592	\$849,735	\$8,074	1,540	\$82,755	\$53,737
35 to 44	5,278	\$5,039,398	\$954,793	\$7,133	5,277	\$304,089	\$57,625
45 to 54	11,993	\$13,296,423	\$1,108,682	\$5,062	11,993	\$730,986	\$60,951
55 to 64	13,290	\$14,276,751	\$1,074,248	\$5,468	13,290	\$744,401	\$56,012
65 and over	15,273	\$18,101,872	\$1,185,220	\$5,797	15,272	\$726,122	\$47,546
All	47,463	\$52,053,543	\$1,096,718	\$5,639	47,461	\$2,591,541	\$54,604

Chart 16 – Average Value of Land and Buildings, Per Farm, 2007

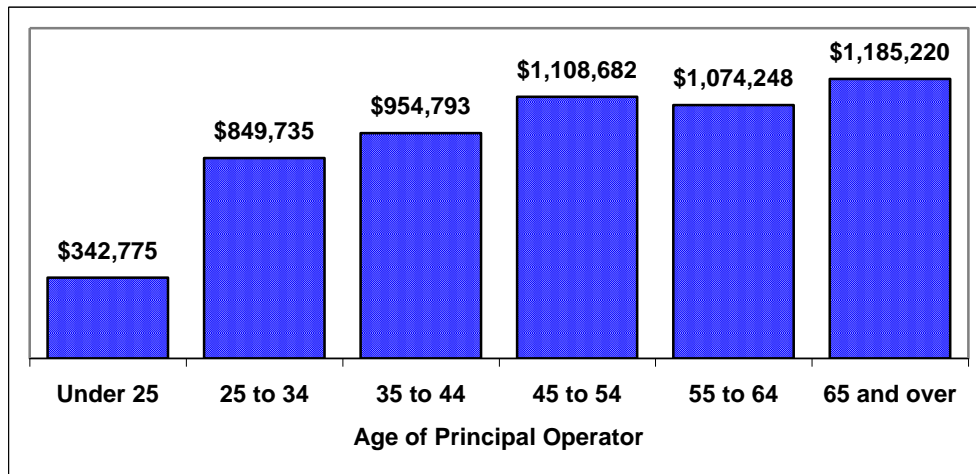


Chart 17 – Average Value of Land and Buildings, Per Acre, 2007

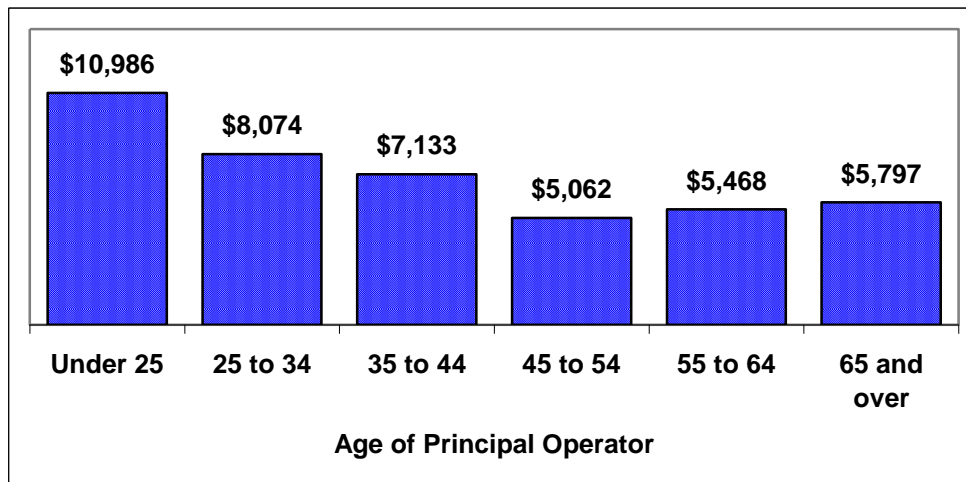


Chart 18 – Average Value of Machinery and Equipment, Per Farm, 2007

